

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The claims have been divided into Groups as follows:

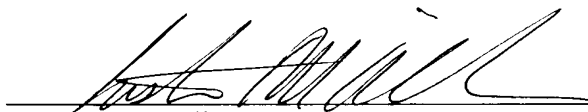
- Group I: Claims 1-3 and 6, drawn to a high dispersible hydrophobic fine silica powder; and
- Group II: Claims 7-14, drawn to a production method of a high dispersible hydrophobic fine silica powder, wherein a hydrophobic agent comprising a volatile organic silicon compound is mixed in the gas state with a fine silica powder in a fluidized bed type reaction vessel.

Applicants elect, without traverse, Group II, Claims 7-14 (drawn to a production method of a high dispersible hydrophobic fine silica powder, wherein a hydrophobic agent comprising a volatile organic silicon compound is mixed in the gas state with a fine silica powder in a fluidized bed type reaction vessel), for examination.

Applicants respectfully submit that the above-identified application is now in condition for examination on the merits, and early notice thereof is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

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